XII. *A Letter from* John Huxham *M. D. F. R. S. to* C. Mortimer *M. D. Secr. R. S. containing Obſervations on the* Northern Lights, *ſeen* Feb. 15 *and* 16, 1749-50.

Dear Sir,

Read June 21, 1750. YOU have herewith an Account of two uncommon *Phænomena*, which I obſerved laſt *February*.

Feb. 15, 1749-50, in the Evening there was a very vivid Northern Light, which darted forth ſeveral beautiful, crimſon, and fiery-colour'd Rays; Wind NW*b*N 1, Barometer 30.2; 50 Minutes paſt 8 a ſurpriſingly bright and exceedingly white Arch, about the Breadth of a common Rainbow, appear'd in the Heavens, extending nearly from Eaſt to Weſt; it reach'd within 5 or 6 Degrees of the Weſtern Horizon, and ended about 8 or 10 above the Eaſtern. It paſſed exactly between *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, and directly over *Aldebaran*, which appeared plainly thro' it. Near the Top of the Arch ſeveral very lucid, white, ſhort, vibrating Columns were attached to it; none of them ſeem'd above 6 or 7 Degrees long, and did not appear to communicate in the leaſt with the *Aurora borealis*. The incloſed Figure (*ſee* TAB. I. *Fig.* 5.) ſomewhat repreſents it. About 9^{h} 12$'$ the Arch vaniſhed; but ſeveral white, bright, corruſcating *Nubeculæ* remain'd here and there in the Zodiac for 12 or 15 Minutes longer. The *Aurora borealis* continued more or leſs till Midnight: The next Morning the Wind was E.1^{x}, Barom. 30.1.

Feb.

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Feb. 16, about 7 *p. m.* we had another *Aurora borealis*, tho' not quite ſo fiery and luminous as that of the Night before: It continued till near 11. At 8^h 56′ *p. m.* exactly, ſuch another Arch appear'd, very nearly of the ſame Extent and Direction, but not altogether ſo broad or lucid. This at firſt alſo paſſed between the two bright Stars of *Gemini*, but declin'd more and more to the Southward, till it was 2 or 3 Degrees to the South of *Pollux*. Its Weſtern Limb, about 9, paſſed through the North Shoulder of *Orion:* It quite diſappear'd about 10 or 12 Minutes after. —— This had no Columns attach'd to it, as the former; tho' it was ſomewhat jagged and unequal towards the North near the *Vertex*. The Wind this Evening was E.2; the Barometer 29.9. The next Morning the Wind was SW*b*W 1, the Barometer 29.9. Neither any Part of the Arch, or the attached Rays were coloured, but perfectly white, and exceeding bright.

I am, dear Sir, with the greateſt Reſpect,

Plymouth, April 18, 1750.

Your affectionate, and moſt obedient humble Servant,

J. Huxham.

Fig. 1.
p. 443.

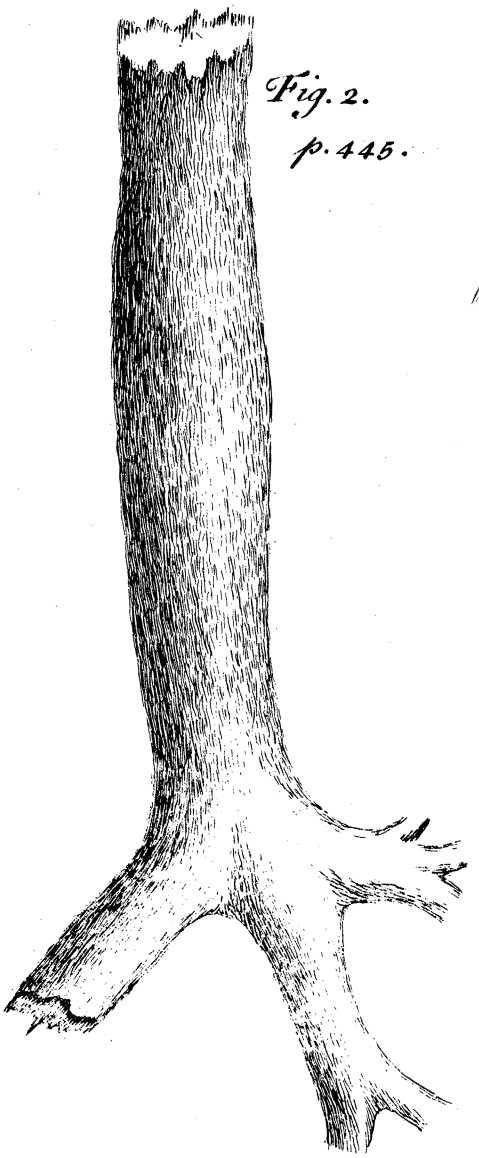

Fig. 2.
p. 445.

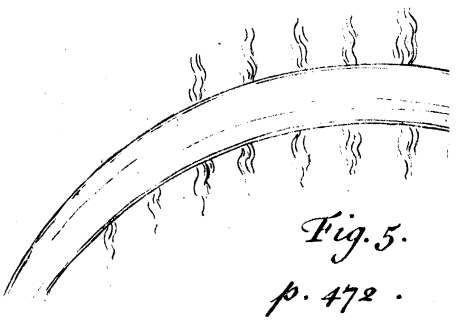

Fig. 5.
p. 472.

Fig. 3.
p. 456.

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Fig. 4.
p. 458.

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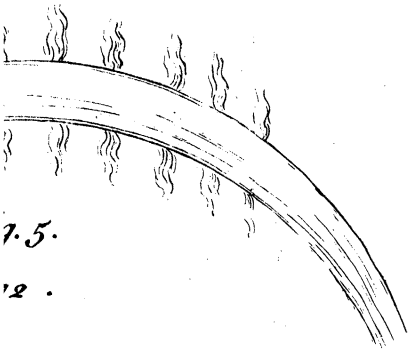

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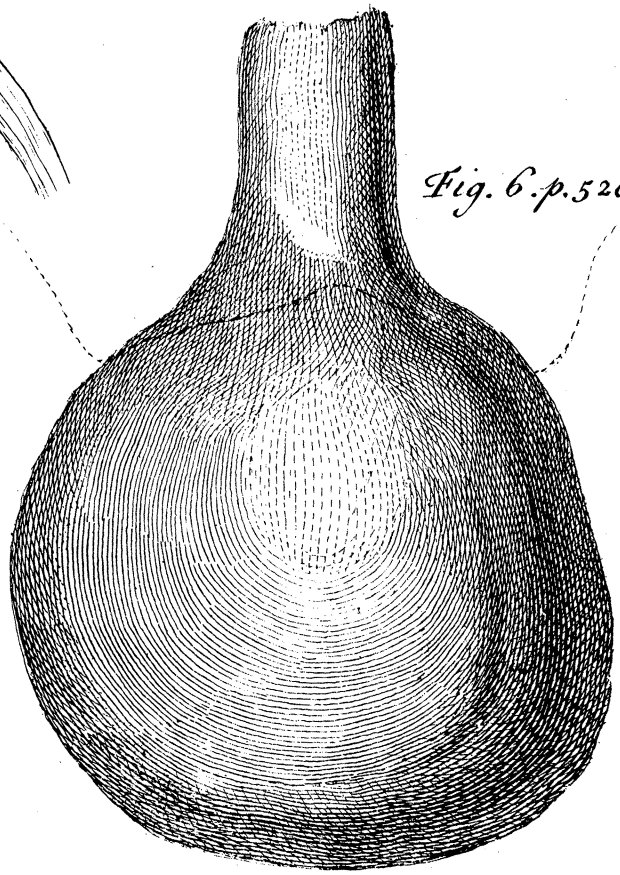

Fig. 6. p. 520.

Fig. 1.
p. 143.

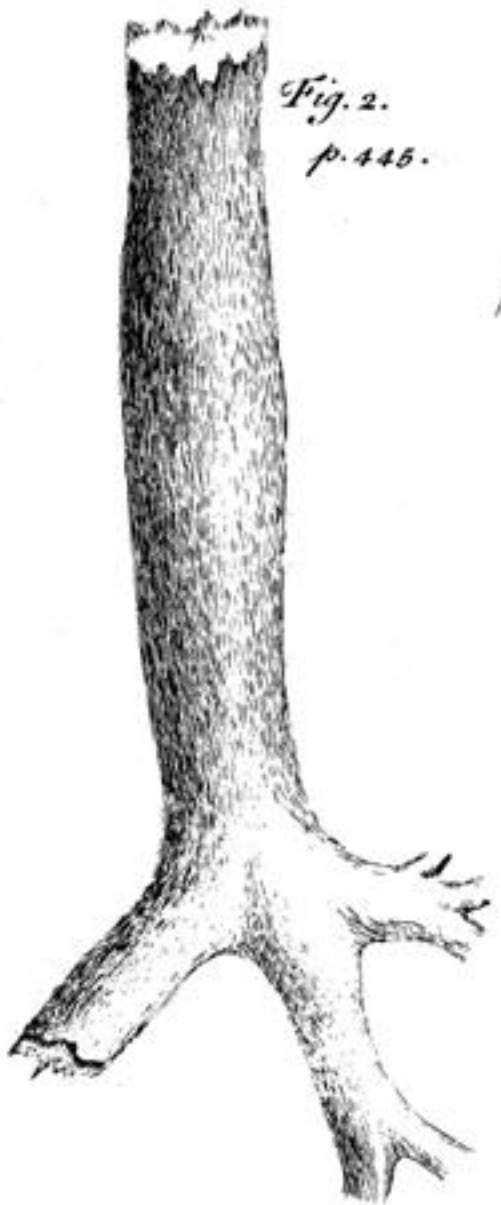

Fig. 2.
p. 445.

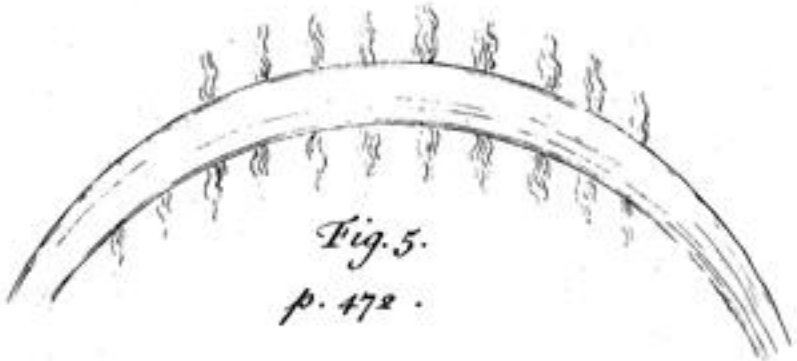

Fig. 5.
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Fig. 3.
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Fig. 4.
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Fig. 6. p. 520.